



## **Arlington Historic District Commissions Final & Approved Minutes – January 25, 2024**

Commissioners Present: C. Barry, P Chaves, B. Cohen, B Labau, B. Melofchik, S. Makowka, C. Tee, J. Worden

Commissioners Not Present: D. Baldwin, S. Savarese

Guests: K. Lubar, N. Stevens, M. Lyon, M. Penzenik, M. Sciaraffa, S. Wilke, D. Leveille, G. Lindemeyer, R. Behrent, S. Doherty, T. Fox

- 1. AHDC Meeting Opens – S. Makowka Presided 8:00pm**
- 2. Approval of draft minutes from September 21, October 26 and December 14, 2023. S. Makowka abstained from the 10/26 meeting due to absence, C. Barry – y, C. Tee -y, Worden – y, LaBau (not 9/21) – y for others, B. Cohen – (not 12/14) y, Melofchik – (abstained Sept/Oct – y for December; S Makowka – abstained from 10/26 but approved all others**
- 3. Appointment of Alternate Commissioners - all at large serving – Alternates: S. Makowka (– Mt Gilboa, Pleasant) , B. – C. Barry, P. Chaves, B. Cohen, B. Labau, S. Makowka, B. Melofchik (Mt Gilboa, Pleasant), B Cohen (; Russell, Mt Gilboa), Chaves (Russell). – C. Barry, P. Chaves, B. Cohen, B. Labau, B. Melofchik; Pleasant St. – C. Barry, P. Chaves, B. Labau, S. Makowka, B. Melofchik**
- 4. Communications**
  - a. Resume and communication from Ken Lubar to fill vacant Jason/Gray AHDC Commissioner Seat – K Lubar joined us and was welcomed by AHDC and gave brief synopsis of his interest in joining the Commission. J Worden moved that the Commission forward the recommendation to the Selectboard, seconded by C. Barry. Roll call . Barry – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Labau – y, Chaves – y, Cohen – y, Melofchik-y, Makowka – y. Unanimous approval.**
  - b. Call from 14 Westmoreland on correction for legal notice (last name and type of vent requested for install)**
  - c. CONCOM agreed to AHDC Chair request to provide an update on the Mt. Gilboa Feasibility Study at the AHDC 1/25 meeting**
  - d. CONA for 11 Academy Street (Frye) for porch window changes. Proposal to insert on the interior of the windows some type of windows behind what exists on the exterior. Asks for sense of Commission about whether this would be treated as something visible albeit not the exterior fabric. His recommendation is that as long as no exterior features are being disturbed and this does not present a visual intrusion on the exterior, that we treat it as non-jurisdictional. C. Barry agrees. No opposition noted.**
  - e. CONA for roof at 194 Pleasant Street (Price).**

- f. **Application received from 14-16 Jason Street (Pergantis) for solar panel installation**
- g. **Revised 2024 AHDC Meeting Calendar (3/21/24 is new date for March meeting, not 3/28 as originally scheduled)**
- h. **S Makowka has asked new Town Counsel for update on 38 Gray Street.**
- i. **Historical Commission has proposed a warrant article to push demo delay up from 1 year to 2 years**

## 5. New Business

- a. **Mt Gilboa Feasibility Study discussion** – Conservation Commission – Presentation given by Nathaniel Stevens and Martha Lyon (consultant) on the history of the property and opportunities for public participation on this study. Showed what they have distributed to public so far and to look on the Conservation Commission website for further info. S Makowka explained how the AHDC works and that demolition delay is part of a separate bylaw. For any demolition, the AHDC will look at individual projects and take their individual merits into account into making any decisions. The structure's history would be taken into account. B Melofchik spoke about the passion in the neighborhood about this property and asked if the CONCOM is exploring other uses of the building other than residential? This is a feasibility study and all options are being explored.
- b. **Continuation of Formal Hearing for 149 Pleasant Street .(FTO Realty Tr) for demolition to top of foundation of existing 1947 ranch and construction of new 2 ½ story house** - M Penzenik gave presentation. S Makowka reminded all we were at the first of a 3 step process for the approval as described in our guidelines.. Question at present is whether there is a reason to determine that nothing should be changed at this particular site. B Cohen said this is a noncontributing structure and she has no problem with something being built on the site. Step 1 – no comment from public. No motion to deny given and Chair deems we follow protocols and move onto step 2 – massing of structure in its environment and within the context of the HD. Massing of structure and context of environment in which it is set.

Applicant made presentation describing huge variety of architecture on Pleasant Street. The Italian Renaissance Revival was best suited to this project. The house directly behind this one at 11 Gray Street is a great example. Stucco, typically red tiled roofs but they will be doing asphalt shingles. Symmetrical in window placements, center entry doors with it are emphasized by the protrusion of part of the wall and the dormer on top. It will fit in nicely with the street and the variety of housing types. Town GIS map shown. The treasured house at 159 Pleasant is tiny in comparison to many of the other houses on the street. Existing footprint shown. It was built according to the required setbacks but makes for a peculiar site and they are maintaining the setbacks. The discussion last month about the parking necessitated a change, next slide showed it divided up for parking for lower unit on Pleasant St and parking for the other 2 units up off of Gray St. Little turn around shown to facilitate not backing into Pleasant St traffic. Photos of house itself shown from different angles. The property grade drops 17 feet from highest to lowest point. Photo on lower right of two houses. Some neighborhood houses across the street. They are close to the street, but 152 is set way back. More photos shown, including Italian Renaissance examples in the

neighborhood. Floor plans shown to understand the design on exterior. The back of the existing structure is at grade and there is a question whether retaining walls will be necessary. A civil engineer will be doing the drawings and dealing with water retention, etc. M Penzenik pointed out that there is a existing room on the back of the house that pokes out and they are expanding that in a sense that they're putting the 2 bathrooms and closets and entry are there which makes it wider than what is existing now and changes the footprint a bit.

The Commission noted that it will want to know how things will look visually from the street including any retaining walls. Applicant replied that any retaining walls will be sympathetic to the neighborhood visually. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor plan shows bump out in the back. Roof plan shown. Front elevation shown again. South elevation as viewed from Gray Street and Pleasant St heading into the center. This façade she believes is as important as the front façade to be a welcoming site coming into Arlington from Route 2. There is a box bay that sits over that entrance complimentary to other examples. Back of house shown with bump out and dormers above on 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. Opposite side elevation shown (north) where the bedrooms are on the lower level – so there will be two windows and the dotted line represents what's required for egress. Streetscape shown in last slide.

S. Makowka opened up to commission for questions. How much higher from the street from the baseline from house to right and to left – M. Penzenik said approx. 5 feet but would have to get back to him on that question. S. Makowka noted that there are hipped roofs without dormers on many of the other examples shown. He noted that the location and size of the proposed dormers makes the massing of the structure seem larger. House feels like its teetering on the hill in the middle. He sees two potential options, one way would be lower so closer to street grade or make the proposed cross dormers less substantial – look at 119 Pleasant Street for example where there is a roofline break between the main hipped roof and the cross dormers. The ridge and planes of the hip roof and of the dormers align making them look bigger. Applicant noted that the dormers are not protruding and it's. It's an illusion because they all have such substantial roof overhangs. They are coplanar with the wall below. S. Makowka agreed with the face of the dormer being coplanar but clarified that his comment went to the treatment of the roof planes.

C Barry said one of the features of this style of home is that there is a very dominant hipped roof sitting on top of the mass of the building. Horizontal aspect reinforced by the roof. This sense could be improved here by making overhangs broader which would increase horizontally of it and make roof stronger. Dormers on end somehow fight with the dominance and overall mass of the roof. They should be clearly secondary. Most dormers on those houses that exist are smaller. Ones on the front of the house are smaller. Having a 3d view would be very helpful to see it from an angle to get an idea about the size of the building. The street view showing the neighboring houses is great. 147 Pleasant feels very big and this . feels even bigger. Smaller dormers would help overall scale of whole structure. The Applicant confirmed that the elevation of first floor of proposed house is the same as the existing house and that they cannot lower the floor of the lower level due to the unit on the lower level. C Barry said he thinks broad overhangs would help reinforce, some sort of contrasting masonry would be good. Also, more generous front porch seems more typical of style

– Applicant indicated that she'll look at these features some more. She noted that the overhangs shown are already 30".

B Labau commented that the examples of houses shown is there's more articulation to them that helps with overall massing – projecting bay windows on 1<sup>st</sup> floor, little details to help break up the scale of the building.

Floor opened to public comment – Ken Lubar commented about going up Gray Street you will block the house next door now. No other public comment.

S. Makowka summarized, in terms of footprint there seems to be no concern for the proposed slight increase at the rear of the structure. Massing is how it is perceived as fitting into the neighboring area. How to emphasize style of roof. Make architectural style more compatible and less significantly imposing from the street relative to the houses around it. A 3-D rendering would certainly help with understanding this aspect of the project. He summarized that he hears the Commission asking that Applicant explore breaking the roofline at top to help with sense of massing and revisit front porch to see if something more substantial can be added in keeping with other examples of this style. Smaller dormers, larger entry. C Barry asked for more info about changes at grade – walls, etc are concerning and it does affect massing.

Applicant noted that the land will be flattened out and then slope up for flat open space on the property. S. Makowka noted concern about what does the visual representation of the retaining walls look like – the one in the front, etc. Would like to see proposal for the height and how it affects contours of the front. B Labau said parking areas were a definite improvement. Look at the cladding on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor to give it a base also. S. Makowka noted that we haven't gotten to step 3 yet (specifications and details), but maybe be prepared at next meeting to get the materials in advance. M Penzenik confirmed agreement to continue meeting to 2/22 meeting.

- c. **Formal Hearing for 50 Pleasant St (Jarvis House – Town of Arlington) for heat pump system installation.** Talia Fox gave presentation for installation of heat pumps at Jarvis House along with Town building supervisor. Interior climate control wanted for building to improve working conditions and aid in preservation of the building. Goal of system is to decrease high interior humidity in the building and prevent significant swelling during summer months. Replacing existing steam boiler and adding heat pump with this change. Locations of outdoor units shown noting that the location of the units near rear extension designed to minimize the impact on the house. The Commission noted that the shown double stacked compressor looks like it might block existing windows -- could they be installed somewhere else or side by side instead of stacked? According to the Applicant, they won't cover the windows. B. Cohen said she felt the proposal is keeping within our guidelines and appreciates the effort. The paint will match to blend with the house. No public comment. C Barry moved to approve project as proposed with the condition that the units do not obstruct any fenestration on the building. J Worden seconded. Roll call vote: Barry – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Labau – y, Cohen – y, Melofchik-y, Makowka – y. Unanimous approval. C Barry appointed monitor.

- d. **Formal Hearing for 22 Prescott Street (Wilke) for installation of a solar panel system.** Mark Wilke gave presentation for installation of solar panels. Beth Melofchik will recuse herself as an abutter. Phil Chaves will be appointed to Russell

Street for this hearing. SunBug is doing the installation. Conduit extends down along sidewall of house near downspout and runs horizontally at skirtboard to enter house by electrical meters. Basically invisible along the side of the house. The required cut off switch would be near the meters but it's a small box (4 or 5 inches square). Horizontal conduit along skirtboard will be painted to match the trim. Panels are all black and will be mounted low as close to roofline as possible. C Barry asked about our guidelines and past practice of discouraging irregular patterns. This part of the roof is not a front facing plane and the pattern is square except for one angle, so S Makowka personally doesn't think this the same irregular sawtooth as seen in other roofs we have had issues with in the past. B. Melofchik as an abutter commented that she's a neighbor and she loves the roof and sees the cross gable out of kitchen windows, but this house has not been sided, it entails more care in painting and she appreciates solar panels being allowed. The angled line in her mind is fine. She hopes commission votes to approve. J Worden moved to approve application as presented, seconded by B Cohen. S Makowka would suggest we amend the motion to add final placement of ancillary equipment be approved prior to installation.; J. Worden so amended his motion and B Cohen seconded amended motion. Barry – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Labau – y, Chaves – y, Cohen – y, Makowka – y. Unanimous approval. B Cohen appointed monitor.

- e. **Formal Hearing for 49 Academy Street (Baldwin) for installation of decorative front railing.** D Baldwin was unable to attend. Hearing deferred until next month so that Applicant can be present to answer questions.
- f. **Formal Hearing for 14 Westmoreland Ave. (Leveille) for bathroom vents.** Very minor and S Makowka suggests we dispense of this with a quick approval. Two small exterior vents for a bathroom and laundry in basement are requested – J Worden moved approval, seconded by C Barry. Roll call vote: Barry – y, Tee – y, Worden – y, Chaves – y, Cohen – y, Melofchik-y, Makowka – y. Unanimous approval. S Makowka appointed monitor.
- g. **Informal hearing (time permitting) for 14 Jason (Pergantis) for solar panel installation** – no one was present to give presentation.

## 6. Old Business

- a. Special Town Meeting and related discussions
- b. *Discussion of ZOOM vs in-person AHDC meetings*
- c. Report from Streetscape sub-committee
- d. Modification of Design Guidelines (Little Libraries, Below Grade Windows)
- e. AHDC Public Input Meeting

## 7. Meeting Adjourns – J Worden moved to adjourn, C Barry seconded. Unanimous approval to adjourn at 1013pm